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ON
THEOSOPHY

THIRTEENTH SERIES

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THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE

I suppose most of you have discovered that the human mind is a kind of broadcasting and receiving set, and often a very powerful one. What we call telepathy, or the transference of thought from one person to another, is a fairly common experience. In some cases those who live together gradually develop the faculty of discerning each other's thoughts. Very often a close friend will begin to say something which expresses exactly one's own train of thought at the time. Sometimes someone begins to hum a snatch of a tune or a song and someone else will exclaim "Why, I was just mentally humming that tune to myself. You must have picked it up from me or else I did from you."

Some people say that, quite outside of the family, this constant interchange of human thought can become so powerful as to produce national characteristics and create public opinion. Public opinion, in its turn, overflows into national behaviour, and national behaviour can make or mar the world.

The subject of telepathy, of man's thought power, is therefore one of very great importance. An American physician, Dr. Flanders Dunbar, has said that there is such a thing as mental and emotional contagion. Those who have tried to serve in hospitals, asylums, and prisons can agree with Dr. Dunbar who goes on to say, "The youngest infant can be infected with fear, anger, or disgust even more easily than with measles. And the results appear in little homely ways long before they develop into major tragedies. But, by the same token, the child can 'catch' love, trust, and respect. The child does not have to be in the room with or actually hear the words of a quarrel or see the action of a violent emotion. The effects are in the very atmosphere, and the children catch the vibrations."

They are sensitive. Some more so than others. Some grown people "catch" vibrations and can sense when they go into a room or a home whether there is peace, love, and harmony there or whether there is disharmony, bickering, and constant quarreling.

These phenomena of the interaction of thoughts and of feelings, and the experience of telepathy have now become so marked that experiments have been carried out to see whether

man really does possess supernormal mental powers.

Let me give you an account of how this work began and of some of the experiments. The modern phase of experimental work in telepathy may be regarded as starting with the work of H.J.F.W.Brugmans of Groningen in 1920 and Miss Jephson in 1924 in England, and the great Dr. J. B. Rhine at Duke University in North Carolina, who has been working in this field from 1930 onwards.

Dr. Rhine, now Professor of Psychology at Duke, whose contribution to the subject has been very considerable, published in 1934 a book entitled EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION which described experiments under severe control, tests under scientific conditions in telepathy, and in what he called Teles-thesia. This is a strange word, "telesthesia". It is the name used by these investigators for this form of extra-sensory perception corresponding to clairvoyance. This book aroused a very fierce controversy. Some believed in it, and some did not.

Meanwhile Mr. G.N.M.Tyrrell in England in 1934 to 1936 was developing an electrical apparatus in which the percipient had to cognize in which of five closed boxes the agent had caused a lamp to be lit; and an ingenious scrambling device ensured that the agent himself did not know which lamp had had been lit by turning a selector-switch. Thus any signalling code, conscious or unconscious, would have been stultified. The conditions were virtually those of teles-thesia, or clairvoyance, since no mind present was aware which lamp was lit until after the choice had been made. Highly significant results were reported with one person under test.

Also in 1934, S. G. Soal, lecturer in mathematics at the University of London, began to carry out an extension repetition of Dr. Rhine's experiments and with the Zener cards, as they are called, cards with very clear symbols on them like squares, triangles, star, wavy lines, and so on. During the next five years he gave individual tests to 160 persons and recorded 128,350 "guesses". In consequence, the possession by man of extra-sensory perception has become a demonstrated fact.

What has Theosophy to say about the mystery of man's mind

and mental powers? A very great deal which is well worthy of our attention and study. At the very outset an interesting, not to say arresting, idea is presented to us. Theosophy states that not only do powers of clairvoyance and telepathy exist, but they can be developed by means of a special kind of self training. Furthermore, those methods have been employed by advanced students who have acquired the faculty to observe directly the operation of the human mind, to see by thought forces and thought waves as we now see by lightwaves. In the main, thought is found to produce four major effects. Two of these are upon the thinker, and two outside of him. Let us take them in turn.

The first effect of thought upon the thinker is to change the person temporarily into a likeness to that quality upon which he thinks. His mental character and appearance are temporarily altered to make him resemble the nature and the subject of his thoughts. Ugly thoughts "uglify", to use Lewis Carroll's word; noble thoughts ennoble, and beautiful thoughts beautify. The mental body and aura assume an appearance appropriate to the type of thought on which the person is engaged.

But what does the mental body look like under its normal conditions? It is found to be composed of two parts: an inner counterpart of the physical body built of the denser material of the mental plane, and an interpenetrating and surrounding aura. This aura is roughly egg-shaped, and about three times the size of the physical body which it also penetrates and surrounds. Brilliant, luminous color is the chief characteristic of the human aura, and each color represents a mental power, a quality of character, or an habitual type of thinking.

The general color of intellectual activity is yellow. This is located in and around the head and is probably the origin of the nimbus or the halo. The color of love-thought is a rose color; of compassion, a soft green; of anger, scarlet; of idealism, lavender which is generally situated in the upper portion of the aura above the head. When the person is strongly moved by love or idealism, for example, the corresponding colors suffuse the aura, temporarily changing it into the likeness of that of which the person is thinking. This is stated in our Christian scriptures in the text which says "For as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." And in the

East, you know, they say "What a man thinks on he becomes.
Think therefore on the eternal."

George W. Russell, the great Irish seer and poet who is known as "A.E.", correctly stated the effect of thought upon the thinker in these words: "Race hatred is the cheapest and basest of all national passions; and it is the nature of hatred, as it is the nature of love, to change us into the likeness of that which we contemplate." This is borne out by theological teaching, based as it is upon direct observation of the processes of thought and their effect upon the thinker.

There is one practical application of this knowledge: human thought force is indeed extremely powerful in the realm of the mind, but it is now known also that our thoughts can actually affect our physical body and its functions. Many of the diseases of man are known to have their roots in the mind and the emotions.

HOW TO HELP BY THOUGHT

There are two effects of thought which are produced outside the thinker. The first is the transmission of rays of thought force, accounting for thought transference or telepathy. But the second, at first hearing, may sound somewhat strange. Please do not discard it too lightly, for it contains a very important idea. In addition to the radiation of thought-force which other people pick up and sometimes act upon, the act of thinking also produces a form made of mind stuff and sometimes called a "thought-form".

What do such thought-forms look like? Well, they are of two classes. One is an exact reproduction in the finer matter of the mental world of an object or person about which one is thinking. This thought image will be clear or vague according to the clarity or the vagueness of the thought itself. The longer a thought is held the more stable is the thought-form. Indeed it is possible to construct thought-forms which will last for centuries, and this actually happens, especially when, in addition to powerful thought, certain ceremonials and rituals are performed and invocations are uttered. Thus our mental world still contains thought-forms which were constructed centuries ago by ceremonial action and by the will of men of magical power, whether good or bad, whether black or white, in ancient civilizations.

But to return to modern days. A thought-form which you make when you think of yourself will move to any place in which you think of yourself as being, and it will move there with the speed of light. Under certain conditions such a mental self-portrait, such a projected thought-form, becomes visible. There are many attested cases of what is called "bi-location", or being in two places at once. What happens is that when you think very strongly of yourself as being in the company of someone to whom you are greatly attached and in whom you take a great interest, your concentrated thought will produce a form of yourself which gradually goes round to the presence of your friend. If your friend is at all psychically sensitive, he might either find himself thinking strongly of you, or he might feel your presence near him in the room, or he might even see the thought-form of you as if you were actually present.

One of the commonest examples of this is the projection and

perception at a distance of someone who is in the process of dying. In his last moments the dying person's strong thought of some loved one in another place will produce an easily visible thought-form which the loved one may perceive. Later on, when the news of the death arrives, the loved one remembers that just at the time of death he thought he saw, or perhaps felt the presence of the deceased person near him in the room.

But there is another kind of thought form. This is produced by abstract, or formless thought such as love, beauty, truth, unity, or even time in general. In that case an appropriate shape appears within the aura and sometimes above the head of the thinker. Supposing a thought of love with a determination to protect someone in danger - a soldier in action, for example - were strongly held. A form would appear expressing that love and that protective desire. Probably the form would be that of a winged sphere - the old Egyptian winged disc or sphere, you know - in which the sphere would be rose colored expressive of love which is the inspiring motive, and the two wings would be a golden yellow representing the action of thought which is the propellant power. This form would flash towards the recipient and would hover in his near neighborhood, slowly discharging its protective influence. Though only an exceedingly powerful thinker could produce a form which would deflect a bullet, even an untrained person can, by love, and still more by prayer and intense thought, send a protective force and a form to one who is known to be in danger. How does this work? Probably by causing the person in danger to move half-consciously backwards or forwards or to one side; and in this way he would avoid, perhaps, some danger either on the ground or in the air.

So, you see, thoughts are indeed things, and the thought power of man is an exceedingly potent agency. The actual formation of one of these thought-forms is vividly described by a great Theosophical seer. He tells how the material of the inner plane is affected when the human mind formulates a definite, purposeful thought or wish. Let me read you just what he says.

"The effect produced" (that is, by this strong thought) "is of a most striking nature. The thought seizes upon the plastic essence of the mental world and molds it instantly into a living thing of appropriate form, a thing which, when

once created, is in no way under the control of its creator, but lives out a life of its own, the length of which is appropriate to the intensity of the thought or wish which called it into existence. The form lasts, in fact, just as long as the thought-force holds it together. Most people's thoughts are floating and indecisive, fleeting and impermanent, so that the elements affected by them last only a few minutes, or a few hours at the most. But an often repeated thought or an earnest wish will form an elemental whose existence may extend through many days.

"Since the ordinary man's thoughts refer very largely to himself, the elementals which they form remain hovering about him and constantly tend to provoke a repetition of the idea which they represent, since such repetitions, instead of forming new elementals, would strengthen the old ones and give them a fresh lease of life. The man, therefore, who frequently dwells on one wish often forms for himself an astral attendant which, constantly fed by fresh thoughts may haunt him for years, ever gaining more and more strength and influence over him. And it will easily be seen that if the desire be an evil one, the effect upon his moral nature may be of the most disastrous character."

That is an instructive piece of evidence concerning the effect of our thoughts, and given by one who could see these things for himself -- no less a personage than C. W. Leadbeater, the great theosophical investigator and writer.

Then again there are other kinds of thoughts which we are advised to try to avoid. One consists of destructive speech and thought about another person's character. This is gossip, and gossip is one of the cruelest evils in the world. It has been called one of the deadly sins. Gossip is not just small talk. It can be the wrecker of lives. And when a group of people get together and think and talk critically about the same subject or person, they generate a very powerful current of their united thought-force, and this weakens the victim of their thought and inevitably makes his or her life much harder to live. Calumny, verbal or mental, carries like waves, and no one can know when or where it will stop.

Another kind of thought against which we are warned is that of bitterness. I am only too well aware that there is much

in human experience and life which can make one bitter and can constitute a very real test of human nature and character; but we should try not to become either cynical or bitter, however hard the test, however unjust and cruel the experiences may be - and are - at times. Someone has said: "To be able to stand in the midst of darkness and live as though all about you was light is the final test of the human spirit." Isn't that a splendid ideal! And I think it is one of great practical value; for all negative and all destructive thoughts are really harmful both to the thinker and to those against whom they may be directed.

Anger, hatred, bitterness, malice, jealousy, envy — all of these, you know, are really poisons. They first come as poisons in the mental and emotional nature. But they can become poisons right down in the body and cause actual lesions there, and be the first beginnings of serious physical disabilities, not to say disease.

Fortunately for us, it is possible to exercise complete control over the powers of our mind. This knowledge which Theosophy gives us will enable us, if it is necessary, to rebuild our characters, to overcome our bad habits, and to develop a radiant, ever helpful personality.

SPIRITUAL HEALING.

Today I shall be dealing with one of the highest and most universal of human aspirations -- to be able to heal by the power of the mind and the spirit. The subject is worthy of careful consideration. Please do not expect me to go straight to the heart of the subject and provide a method and a formula which can be applied immediately with assurance of success. If you are hoping for that, I hope you will excuse me, because I want to go in some detail into a profound subject.

Actually I do not believe that a universal panacea which can give immediate results is in existence. Also it is important to remember that there are physical causes and physical cures of disease. Therefore I want it to be clearly understood that if a person is seriously ill he should consult a reputable and reliable physician. Nevertheless, it has now been scientifically demonstrated that the root causes of many of the sufferings of mankind lie deeper than the physical body, have their roots in man's emotional and mental nature. The emergence and rapid development of what is called psychosomatic medicine establishes this fact and points to the value of psychological, mental, and spiritual methods of healing.

But just what is psychosomatic medicine? It is not a branch of psychiatry or of any specialty. It is based on the fact that the mind and the body are inseparable and, together, constitute the human being. The word "psychosomatic" is derived from the Greek "psyche" meaning "spirit or soul," and "soma" meaning "body". It is therefore a fresh approach to all medicine.

This new attitude recognizes the fact that the human being is complicated and mysterious, a creature whose brains and emotions and tissues are constantly reacting upon one another. We do some things deliberately: we run or work or eat by our own will. We decide to wash the breakfast dishes but we do not decide to blush with embarrassment or to double our heartbeats with rage. These actions are controlled by the involuntary, or automatic nervous system.

Such deep feelings as hate, fear, the need of love -- of which we may be wholly unconscious -- may find expression through this involuntary system. If a mother, for example,

is worried over her children, she may have an attack of indigestion. If she continues to make herself sick over a sufficient period of time, a real damage to the tissues may ensue. A person may go to a doctor with possible serious gastro enterostomal complaint and find it is caused by emotional tension. Then the doctor not only treats the physical ailment but also looks for the cause in the patient's emotional structure. It is now a regular theory of the practice of medicine.

Now this leads us directly to our subject of spiritual healing; and we are going first of all to consider how healer and suppliant may best cooperate. To answer that we must know what is man. Theosophy answers that man is "a thinker". Hence his name, for the word "man" comes from the sanskrit root meaning "to think". Man is also a being of emotion and of physical activity. And overshadowing, while acting thru thought, emotion, word and deed, is the innermost Self of man, his immortal soul, the divine spirit in him, a manifestation of spiritual will. Once we are confronted with the profound truth, namely, that the highest spiritual soul of man is forever at-one with the source of its existence, that God-spirit and man-spirit are one spirit -- when this begins to be realized, then that power can be tapped and released for the service of one's fellowmen.

The first step, then, in self-preparation to become a spiritual healer is self-discovery. By regular daily meditation the innermost self, the divine presence within, should be sought. By self-purification the body should be sensitized so that, through heightened awareness, it may respond to the divine presence and power within. Then the faculty may be gradually developed of drawing upon this inner power, and directing it for the help of those in need.

There is also the concept of man as a power unit through whom the divine creative force flows continually. Man in his spiritual nature may be regarded as re-laying power throughout his whole being from the inexhaustible universal thought which is God. The unimpeded rhythmic flow of this force throughout man's nature is essential to health and happiness. When it flows freely through a man it vitalizes him, and it can heal him when he is sick. But resistance to this force in thought, feeling, or action sets up friction, discordance, distortion, and can even cause physical malfunction & disease.

So we are now able to give a definition of health. In terms of dynamics, health is the unimpeded rhythmic flow of power, life, and consciousness from the inner, higher self of man through all his vehicles. He becomes sick because somewhere in his nature a condition exists which obstructs, or diverts from its proper channels, the universal life force. Spiritual healing can remove these interior obstructions at the mental, the emotional, and the physical levels.

How are these barriers set up in us? By our violations of the law of love and the law of the unity of life. These violations take two forms, the objective and the subjective. Objectively, selfishness and cruelty in word and deed set up discordances within us. Subjectively, our thoughts and feelings of bitterness, dislike, hate, desire to dominate, anger, and unforgiveness are sources of ill health. They are veritable poisons and can literally poison the bodily system. A very simple but sure recipe for good health and happiness is to cease from hurting others.

There is, however, another way in which we bring ill health upon ourselves. It is by the misuse of our bodies; for the body is a temple of the God-self within and a potential vehicle by means of which the inner soul, the true self, gains the experience necessary to its evolutionary progress. The healer's task is to remove interior barriers dependent upon ethics and right conduct, and to restore the harmonious flow of the inner life throughout the whole nature of the sufferer. Successfully applied, spiritual healing brings down an immense flood of divine life which can restore the sufferer to his center and, so to speak, sweep him clean.

How may the "patient" cooperate? First and foremost, by a genuine and sincere endeavor to correct errors in character, in thought, and in feeling, and in the conduct of life. Moreover, the mental attitude should be one of understanding without bitterness, and of recognition of personal responsibility for one's own sufferings. Here are five rules which those who seek spiritual healing - indeed all who would maintain good health - would do well to obey:

- 1st - Cultivate a state of good will to all people; harmoniousness and harmlessness to all. These are the great preventatives against ill health.
- 2nd - Develop a habit of happiness. The perfect lubricant for stiff joints in the oil of joy.

- 3rd - Do not nurse grievances. Deliberately forgive all who hurt you, as you hope to be forgiven by those you may have hurt.
 - 4th - Send out affection to all. As harmlessness prevents, so goodwill cures disease and suffering.
 - 5th - Link up each day regularly with the Source of spiritual power and blessing within you.
- Such are the five rules for health and happiness.

Now for the actual process of spiritual healing whether the sufferers are present or not. First of all, have a list of the Christian and the surnames of those to be healed. Next, in complete privacy and with the body relaxed, turn your thoughts in powerful concentration, but reverently, to the healing source. For most Christians, doubtless this will be the Lord Christ, the great Healer of men. Visualize Him, reverently draw near to Him, seeking to realize His presence. After each name, concentrated upon and visualized if possible, say aloud with powerful intent, "May the healing power of the Lord Christ descend upon you."

In the pause between names - a five second pause is suggested - visualize the sufferer as radiantly well, as in the very presence of the Lord Christ, and flooded by His glorious healing power and golden light.

After all the names have been mentioned, continue as follows with full intent:

"May Christ's healing power descend upon them all,
and may the Holy Angels encompass them."

After another pause say:

"May the Light of Christ's love enfold them
forever. Amen."

Anyone who will sincerely, selflessly, and regularly follow these procedures will prove to himself that any clean living, reasonably intelligent unselfish person can heal effectively by the powers of the mind and the spirit.

THEOSOPHY AND PSYCHIATRY

You who have been listening to these broadcasts on Theosophy are aware that here is a teaching which gives meaning to life and purpose to living. Here is a system of thought which enhances human dignity.

It is a sad commentary on human experience that recent decades have left people little in the way of human dignity. Too many have felt, mistakenly of course, that in the interest of science they must cease to be religious or to revere the spiritual side of life. Too many have believed it more important to be sophisticated than reverent, to quote the latest catch-phrases of knowledge than to speak about meaning in life, or about religion at all.

The effect of all this upon individuals has been disastrous. Mental disorders, nervous breakdowns, psychoses, neuroses, are all too common. And we tend to lay it all to the unbearable pressures of wartime living and suffering, or to the fierce struggles of the business world. People have suffered so much, it is said, and are so fearful of further suffering and more especially of the futility of their suffering that they seek escape either in dissipation or in nervous breakdown.

And yet men have always suffered. And endured. What is the special factor in twentieth century suffering? Is it not the loss of a sense of high purpose in individual life? Is it not, for these broken ones, a loss of the religious concept? There is a new school of psychiatry which is beginning to say just that.

Amidst all this, Theosophy has been steadily and quietly maintaining that there is high purpose and meaning in life which takes much of the sting of bitterness from human suffering. Theosophy continues to explain the higher nature of every human being, his power over his own destiny, and his limitless creative potentialities. Therefore it is nothing less than exciting for a student of Theosophy to come upon the recent work in psychiatry of such a person as Dr. Viktor Frankl of the University of Vienna, the acknowledged home of psychiatry. We will speak further of his work in a moment; but first let me give you a little background for what we shall then be saying.

In my fairly recent talk to you on Theosophy and Parapsychology, I pointed out that in spite of high hopes held at the turn of the century that Psychology would reveal to man the great secrets of our time, Mme. Blavatsky's statement, made in the 1880's that modern reformed Chemistry would be the great revealer had been borne out by the current chemistry of atomic fission, atomic fusion, the atom-bombs, etc. And that its partner, Physics, had pointed the way to constructive use of atomic energy by developing a simple motor for producing electricity from radio-active material. And now, even more recently, comes the announcement of the production of electricity from solar energy, from the sun itself, a process made possible by a chemist, a physicist, and an electrical engineer of the Bell Telephone Laboratories -- the same men, in passing, who developed the transistor.

You know, I believe the most remarkable and satisfying thing about a study of Theosophy is that it excludes nothing. Every phase of life and form is a matter of interest to the theosophist, because every detail is recognized as being part of a beautifully ordered whole. And even in this matter of the invention of a motor powered by light from the sun, and already capable of producing fifty watts of electricity per square yard of sunlight - even in this connection we find a pertinent statement in The Secret Doctrine. Written roughly seventy years ago it contains this statement: "The sun in the store-house of Vital Force which is the Noumenon of Electricity". In other words, electricity is the phenomenon stemming from the vital force in our sun; and a little device which you can hold in the palm of your hand now transforms one into the other, vital force, solar energy, into electricity.

Hardly a month goes by, it seems, without the revelation of some new wonder on our planet or in our solar system, brought to our attention by modern exact science, though hinted at through the centuries by the esoteric science.

But to return to Psychology from which so much was expected by the layman. We find that it has been in the main a disappointment as a revealer of hidden knowledge about man. And the result has been the development of two subdivisions, or branches of Psychology, which do deal more specifically with the hitherto uncharted aspects of the human psyche. Uncharted, that is, in the west. Oriental Psychology charted them

centuries ago. The two branches to which I refer are Parapsychology, which we discussed recently, and Psychiatry which is our subject today.

Psychiatry and Psycho-analysis deal with the non-physical aspects of man, with what Theosophy calls the etheric, emotional, and mental phases of his personality. Little has thus far been studied about the higher aspects of man as ego, or soul. Yet the trend is in the right direction as we shall presently see.

In the beginnings of psycho-analysis Sigmund Freud studied the dream consciousness of his patients and concluded that sex was the driving force in human psychology. Alfred Adler and C. C. Jung, succeeding him, disagreed, naming respectively the social urge and ambition as the driving force. All three counted heavily on dream experience of their patients, and on delving into submerged memories for diagnosis. Much healing has emerged from this psycho-therapy, but also some harm. Students of Theosophy can readily see the dangers of over-concentration on the personal self, which can intensify the very symptoms it is seeking to cure; and also the dangers of bringing again to the fore in one's mind along with the causes of neurosis, certain other problems which the patient had dealt with karmically and settled to the satisfaction of the law of his being.

An English writer on Psychiatry, Geraldine Coster, in her book YOGA AND WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY says that, up to a point, those two are comparable. She makes the interesting observation that the "Yoga Aphorisms", which were written down in the second century A.D. by Patanjali, outline the first steps to be taken by a student of Yoga as follows:

- 1- Relaxation of tension through discipline
- 2- Study, and a steadying of the mind
- 3- Resignation.

In comparison, modern analytical therapy (psychiatry) seeks:

- 1- A relaxation from the tensions of wanting
- 2- Enthusiastic and concentrated thought
- 3- An acceptance of the teacher and of life.

A very interesting parallel showing that the needs of the human psyche are perpetual and universal. Analysis is new and young, while Yoga is mature and very ancient. Liberation which is the goal of Yoga, is far beyond the idea of the "free psyche" which is the goal of Psychiatry.

Now to return to Vienna and Dr. Frankl. There is appearing in Vienna a new school of thought in the realm of Psychiatry, and Dr. Viktor Frankl is its founder. His conclusion is simple: "Men and women" he says "are driven not only by sex and ambition but also by an overriding need for God and a purpose in life.....We recognize that man is often more religious than he thinks. More men have laid down their lives for spiritual ideals than for sexual love: how then can psychiatrists, in logic, place all their stress on sexual motivations and ignore other interests which are proven to be quite as strong?"

So numerous have been Dr. Frankl's experiences with patients suffering from "spiritual repression" that he calls it "the real pathology of our age", the cure for which lies in finding meaning in life and purpose in living. "People who lead meaningful lives" he writes, "are fully alive, creative and at peace". He contends too that people suffering from psychological breakdowns can best be helped by the combined efforts of a physician and a spiritual leader — science and religion working together. I refer you to an article on Dr. Frankl's work in the April, 1954, issue of The Woman's Home Companion for further details of this significant new trend in modern psychiatry.

A student of Theosophy will at once recognize the value of this trend as fulfilling and documenting one teaching of the Ancient Wisdom — that man is a spiritual being and can know himself as such; that a high purpose shines through all his experience, helping him to grow towards the perfection which will one day be his; that his life can be meaningful; that his own dignity will be restored.

"THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IS MAN"

Suppose we consider that one way of looking at our lives would be to consider ourselves as agents of the Higher Self within us, sent out by him to gather facts and material for his work. An appropriate analogy would be the life of a news correspondent. A great newspaper or magazine catering to millions of people for information and amusement needs many types of news items for that work, so it sends out its agents, or correspondents, to gather and deal with the necessary material.

That quite aptly pictures the situation of the higher Ego which is spiritual in essence and powerful on its own plane, but which is impelled by divine urge to conquer this material plane through evolutionary means. This egoic individuality is a divine archetype of what we human beings are destined in course of time to become. This spiritual man who watches over our destinies - as much as we will permit - has permanent residence on a much higher level of consciousness than man in general can reach without very special effort. It is part of the plan of evolution that spirit shall dominate matter, and that matter shall be the well-trained obedient servant of spirit. Our own spiritual ego, then, has this urge to unite with that material fragment of itself which we call the personal self.

In order to learn how to manipulate the denser grades of matter of the mental, astral, and physical levels, the ego sends out a fragment of himself like a foreign correspondent, with orders to keep in touch with the head office by filing periodic reports of his observations. In Theosophy we call this assignment "an incarnation". When the man has completed the heavy assignment he returns to the head office, and takes a vacation. This corresponds to the death of the body and the period of rest and assimilation in the heaven world.

If the agent has obeyed his superior and done an effective job, his reward is great, for a relationship of trust and responsibility develops between them, and rapid promotions follow. One would say that such a correspondent was smart and used common sense. But how about the correspondent who took his assignment and money and had what he called a "good time", neglecting to send in his reports, ignoring his assignments and living completely on his own without supervision?

His superior would consider him more or less a total loss, would he not?

Similarly, the ego in its relationship with the personality would find the channel blocked and its own progress slowed down thereby. We can easily see how short-sighted such a negligent agent is when we think of it as an incident in a man's business life. But it also so truly describes the relationship of the ego with his personality that, to one who grasps the idea, it could bring about an awakening and a tremendous determination to "cable the home office" for further orders. The interesting thing about this human situation, if we but realized it, is that keeping in touch with spiritual headquarters makes life much more fascinating and thrilling.

A commentator says: "Occultism is the conscious cultivation of genius; and it is certain that the awakened spiritual man attains to the perception of genius. Genius is the vision, the power of the spiritual man, whether its possessor recognizes this or not. All true knowledge is of the spiritual man. The greatest in all ages have recognized this and put their testimony on record. The great in wisdom who have not consciously recognized it have ever been full of the spirit of reverence, of selfless devotion to truth, of humility. Reverence and humility are the unconscious recognition of the nearness of the spirit, that divinity which broods over us.

"This is attained step by step. It is a question not of miracle but of evolution, of growth. Newton had to master the multiplication table, then the four rules of arithmetic then the rudiments of algebra before he came to the binomial theorem. At each point there was attention, concentration, insight. Until these were attained, no progress to the next point was possible. So with Darwin. He had to learn the form and use of leaf and flower, of bone and muscle; the characteristics of species and genera; the distribution of plants and animals, before he had in mind that nexus - that tying together - of knowledge on which the light of his great idea was at last to shine.

"So it is with all knowledge. So it is with spiritual knowledge. Take the matter this way: the first subject for the exercise of my spiritual insight is my day with its circumstances, its hindrances, its opportunities, its duties. I do

what I can to solve it, to fulfill its duties, to learn its lessons. I try to live my day with aspiration and faith. That is the first step. By doing this, I gather a harvest for the evening, I gain a deeper insight into life, by virtue of which I begin the next day with a certain advantage, a certain spiritual advance and attainment. So with all successive days. In faith and aspiration, we pass from day to day growing in knowledge and power, with never more than one day to solve at a time, until all life becomes radiant and transparent." (Yoga Aphorisms; C. Johnston.)

Plato (in Phaedrus) said "Trees and fields tell me nothing: men are my teachers"; and Pope (in Essay on Man) said "Know then thyself....The proper study of mankind is man." Thinkers and philosophers throughout the ages have studied man from every angle. The marvellous mechanism of his physical body has served as a model in science and mechanics; but man's physical body, wonderful as it is, is yet but the facade of the whole edifice. The whole man reaches far into the spiritual realms by a well connected ladder of expanding powers. These can be reached by anyone who will make the start. Man has first to want to be all of his potentials -- a halfhearted wish is too easily dissipated by the first obstacle.

This study of man and his latent potentialities brings to mind the old tale of the prisoner in the high tower who could find no means of escape except from within himself, from the power of his intelligence. To his wife who would come and stand outside the tower each night to keep him company he said, "Get a beetle, a thread, a string, twine and a rope. Smear the beetle's feelers with honey, tie the thread around his body and set him on the wall going up". The next night she started the beetle upward. Seeking the sweet ahead of it, it continued upward until the man could touch it. With the delicate thread in his hand followed by the string, the twine and the rope, the man was soon on the ground and made good his escape to freedom.

So do we go from "here" to "there" by one stage at a time, increasing our power at each stage. The whole secret of bridging the gulf between outer man and inner man, between the lower and the higher lies in this - that one thing leads to another. Therefore it is essential to point in the right direction.

In the endeavor to understand the whole of man, Theosophy has

scientifically probed into his various types of consciousness dividing it into physical (brain), emotional-moral, concrete mental, abstract-metaphysical, spiritual, and finally that stage of consciousness which knows identity with the monad, "the one" which is described as "a spark from the divine flame". This monad is our link with God, immeasurably beyond our everyday consciousness as it is. There are no gaps between these stages of consciousness, one leading always to the next higher.

"As sparks of the divine flame we are in direct contact with the inexhaustible reservoir of power of which the Logos of our system is the expression.....Between absolute power and man there is an unbroken connection; and the links in the chain are, scientifically speaking, the receiving and transmitting stations, so devised that the voltage is reduced step by step as it passes through the transformers of nature from the absolute source to the ultimate expression in man..... If we would switch on the power we must study the mechanism until we become familiar with every part....Everyone who has been officially accepted into any of the great religions of the world by the prescribed ceremonial should remember that he has a direct link with its Founder." (Hodson:First Steps)

"The one great means of contacting and releasing these various sources of energy is by meditation. By meditation only can we raise our consciousness to those levels where these hidden energies are stored.....Step by step each new outlook leads to a broader view, for ultimately the divinity within must shine freely through the bodies which imprison it."(Ibid)

When the ego finds that he has a personality - or agent, to return to our simile - who is willing to cooperate with him, his radiance and gladness on the inner planes are wonderful to behold. That particular incarnation becomes an outstanding expression of genius of some kind since, as the student of Theosophy must not forget, the ego possesses the essence of all the qualities of character and the powers and capabilities of action which have been developed through centuries of incarnations in the flesh.

"Man know thyself" is a command which mankind needs to re-discover, for "there is a divinity which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will".

THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF PSYCHIC POWERS

Are we justified in regarding psychic powers as worthy of serious consideration? Are such experiences as "dreaming true", knowing what is happening at a distance, and receiving supposedly psychic warnings about the future which, later on, prove founded on facts -- are these things really of value? Or are they, rather, vain imaginings, or products of self deceit, or the desire to deceive others?

Modern science evidently considers that they are worthy of very careful study, for in certain universities in America, Europe, and England, the whole subject of man's supernormal powers has for a long time been submitted to severe scientific investigation. The leader of the work in America is Dr. J. B. Rhine, as doubtless you all know, the Professor of Psychology at Duke University, North Carolina. Some of you may have read his remarkable works describing years of research in this field. One of the titles he has published is THE REACH OF THE MIND. And another is NEW FRONTIERS OF THE MIND. I recommend these two books to anyone who is interested in this subject.

Here is what Dr. Rhine says about his own work in the field of extra-sensory perception, or ESP as psychic powers are now called: "Every day we are learning new things about the hidden powers of the mind. We now have to realize that we know very little. However, one thing we have learned is that powers beyond those commonly recognized do exist; and that conscious thought-transference, seeing without the senses, and foreknowledge of the future are actually far from rare. On the contrary, these faculties are surprisingly common and widely distributed among people." "Back in 1930" he goes on, "a band of researchers at Duke University set out to determine through scientifically controlled experiments whether the human mind does possess a means of obtaining information that is independent of the bodily senses.

"We conducted thousands of tests. We tested men, women, children, old people, college students, even mental defectives. We used symbols of various sizes, shapes, and colors. We ran tests in which both the transmitter and the receiver, the experimenter and the subject, were in the same room; and also tests with hundreds of miles between the two participants. We worked under conditions in which the experiment-

er knew beforehand the symbols that the subject was to guess, and those in which the experimenter himself remained in ignorance until after the experiment was completed. Again and again we obtained scores which could not conceivably be explained as the result of chance, cheating, or involuntary leakage. Apparently some action was taking place that our present day textbooks cannot explain. That process we labelled 'extra-sensory perception', or 'ESP' for short." This passage summarizes Dr. Rhine's general attitude towards psychic phenomena.

Now have these powers and experiences of man any real, practical value? Undoubtedly they have. Some of you may remember strange but very useful experiences which have come to friends of yours and saved them trouble - even their lives.

Here is a case from Australia which happened to a Mr. Harry Bonner. This is the story from the press: "A sudden premonition led 60-year-old fireman Harry Bonner to the rescue of a drowning girl late on Thursday afternoon. He swam through a choppy sea to bring Rosetta Prout, eight, back to the shore. Mr. Bonner said he was sitting on the lawn of his home when the premonition came to him. 'I at once put on my bathers, went to the beach, and thought I saw a ball floating in the water', he said. 'Then a big wave washed against the object and I realized that it was a child.' Mr. Bonner took about three minutes to reach the girl, eighty yards out, and he was exhausted when he carried her on to the beach. She recovered in Children's Hospital and went on to become quite all right again."

As for dreaming true, here is a case which Dr. Rhine records: "One very uncomplicated story of precognition was told us the other day by the mother of a four-year-old girl. When mother and child entered the grocery store one morning, the little girl immediately got down on all fours and started scrambling about under the counter and back of the barrels. The child was usually quite sedate and proper. 'What on earth are you doing?' the mother asked. 'I'm looking for a sixpence I dreamed last night I found here -- Oh, here it is!' and she held it up." Dr. Rhine's comment upon this incident reads like this: "These clear waking experiences are quite common, and they are not always reasonable; but I doubt whether they have anything to do with reason as we know it."

What, then, has Theosophy to say about these odd sorts of hap-

penings? Does man indeed possess latent powers which are beyond reason as we know it, to quote that phrase from Dr. Rhine? Yes, man does possess such powers, Theosophy answers. It also gives a rational explanation, not only of the powers themselves, but of the fact that they are becoming more and more noticeable at this time. They are signs of the progress or evolution of man.

Human evolution, says Theosophy, is twofold. It consists of the unfoldment of consciousness and of the appropriate parallel development of the physical brain and sensory organs. These two aspects of human evolution proceed together. How far, then, has man travelled up to now? Well, we have reached self-conscious awareness physically, emotionally, and mentally: we can say "I act, I feel, I think". We also have developed the five senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell. And just at this time we are adding a sixth sense which scientists call ESP.

Do we need this extra sense? Certainly we do; for while these present powers of ours reveal a great deal to us about our surroundings, life itself still remains a mystery.

The botanist, for example, examines a flower but never understands it. He observes and catalogs sepals, petals, ovaries, stigmas, stamens, leaves, stems and roots, and so on; but the production of a flower and a seed remains a mystery. No one at present knows how, why, or by what agency a flower - or any other organic form - develops from a minute germ in the seed, bulb, or root. Reproduction remains a mystery; but that is only because the real knowledge lies beyond the reach of our present five senses and our analytical mind. A higher faculty is needed in order to observe life at work within the form, to see direct the divine intelligence and the creative life-force performing their miracles of reproduction, growth, and the production of more seeds.

Fortunately we need not despair of solving the great mystery of life itself, for the evolution of man is, in itself, very far from complete. A sixth and a seventh sense are already being foreshadowed today, and still lie latent in the mind and brain of humanity. The powers of abstract thought, of conscious intuition, of clairvoyance, and clairaudience are already budding in man. Later races, says Theosophy, will develop and use them as naturally as man at present uses his

five senses. Then, and then alone, the mystery of life will be solved.

Perhaps at this point you might ask the question, "What, then, are the organs of the new senses? For after all, our five senses have each their bodily organs through which they work. What, then, are the organs of clairvoyance, clairaudience, consciously controlled intuition, and premonitions?" They are within the body rather than on the outside. In fact, they are within the brain, and they consist of two small organs which have been the subject of a great deal of anatomical and physiological research in this century. They are called the pituitary body and pineal gland. How do these organs become hyperactive, as it were? How do they reveal to us more about nature and the world outside of ourselves than we now know? I would reply: by virtue of the arousing into activity of a tremendous latent force which is locked up in the body of man. This energy, too, is receiving a great deal of attention nowadays. Many books are being written about it, and experiments are being conducted.

I want to make it very clear that an academic study of these subjects must not be taken to imply encouragement to seek psychic development. Theosophy warns us against developing psychic powers as an end in itself, warns us seriously against premature attempts to arouse and develop senses and powers which are at present latent within us.

What do I mean by "premature"? Why shouldn't we experiment with these forces? Because it can be very dangerous to practice various forms of yoga, as it is called, such as deep breathing, and concentration upon certain organs of the body, especially the solar plexus, to develop psychic powers. I warn against that. It is dangerous indeed. Theosophists are advised to study these matters mentally, as you and I are doing now, and to wait until a true teacher, a senior in evolution, a Master in fact, is found to guide us through the dangers and difficulties inseparable from the process of forcing one's evolutionary progress.

Let us always remember that the development of psychic powers is not the supreme evolutionary attainment. Spirituality is the goal. Psychic powers are but the by-product of the process of obtaining spiritual vision and realization.

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